

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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*****For Immediate Release*****

Date: September 9, 2006 / 11:30 a.m.
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Injury Collision In Pierce County Leaves Teen In Serious Condition

A 16 year-old girl sustained life-threatening injuries when she was ejected from a vehicle northbound Interstate 5 (I-5) just north of 96th St. in Pierce County. Some lanes were blocked for more than four hours for the investigation.

The September 9th incident occurred at 5:15 a.m. when the State Patrol began to receive reports of a one car injury collision northbound I-5 at 96th St. in Pierce County. According to witnesses, 18 year-old Samuel L. Johnson of Tacoma was driving 1991 Ford Escort north on I-5 approaching 96th St. in the inside lane when the vehicle jerked to the left and struck the Jersey Barrier then lost control to the right, across all lanes, and struck a Guard Rail and landed on its top. Johnson sustained serious injuries and was transported to Tacoma General Hospital. Johnson had two teenage girls as passengers. The right front passenger, a 16 year-old, was not wearing a seatbelt and was ejected from the vehicle and sustained life-threatening injuries. The rear passenger, a 14 year-old, sustained serious injuries and both were transported to Mary Bridge Children's Hospital in Tacoma.

Investigators believe that alcohol is a factor in this tragic and preventable collision. Johnson may face Vehicular Assault Charges. The 16 year-old sustained severe injuries and may not survive. Johnson could potentially face Vehicular Homicide and Vehicular Assault Charges.

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